

REMARKS

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for her careful consideration of the application thus far.

The Examiner has maintained the rejection of all claims, primarily for being unpatentable over McCasland (US 5,856,931) and Lovoi (US 6,480,699). While certain claims were rejected in view of McCasland and Lovoi and further in view of other art (e.g., Dolin, Beller et al and Benson et al), the rejections are all based on the combination of McCasland and Lovoi. Therefore, the Applicant's remarks below are addressed primarily to McCasland and Lovoi.

The Applicant continues to rely on the argument previously submitted in the response dated September 18, 2006, and respectfully submits that the claims as currently amended are patentably distinguishable over the cited references for the reasons given below.

***The currently amended claims are not obvious in view of the cited art***

In the Detailed Action, page 8, the Examiner responded to the Applicant's previous arguments as follows:

Applicant further submits that McCasland does not teach that a computer can "generate a maintenance report with an optimized repair task route, setting out the supplies that will be required, any special or unusual circumstances relating to specific fixtures 10, and the location of the circuit breaker which controls power to each fixture 10"; and a "computer 30 is programmed to establish a repair task route for fixtures 10 identified by the observer as being in need of repair, which is set out in maintenance report 32 in the nature of a work order"; Although these descriptions were presented in the specification of the current application, similar to the above arguments provided by the Examiner, these descriptions were not recited in the claims. Therefore, the Examiner is not limited to read the claims under these descriptions, which was intended by the Applicant. Therefore, the Examiner believes that McCasland in view of Lovoi still reads on the claimed invention.

The Applicant has now amended claim 1 to specifically recite that the report generated by the microprocessor appliance further identifies "supplies required for the identified light fixtures", as described in paragraph 37 of the present application. Claim 1 in its entirety now reads:

1. A light fixture management system, comprising
  - a plurality of labels each containing unique indicia,
  - a portable reader for reading the indicia on the labels,
  - a microprocessor appliance comprising a database, for receiving information collected by the reader corresponding to indicia read by the reader, and associating the received information with corresponding information in the database, the database comprising information relating to a plurality of light fixtures comprising the locations of the plurality of light fixtures and supplies relating to the plurality of light fixtures,wherein when the plurality of labels are each physically associated with one of the plurality of light fixtures and the labels physically associated with light fixtures identified as being in need of repair or maintenance are read by the reader, the microprocessor appliance is configured to generate a report with information specific to the identified light fixtures, the report comprising a repair task route based on relative locations of the identified light fixtures, specifying a sequence of light fixture maintenance based on the relative locations of the identified light fixtures and further identifying supplies required for the identified light fixtures.

As can be seen from the foregoing amendments, further amendments have been made to claim 1 (e.g., the recital that the database comprises information such as the locations of the plurality of light fixtures, and supplies relating to those fixtures), as well as some amendments to further clarify the subject matter of the claim. Similar amendments have been made to currently amended claim 10, which now reads:

10. A method of managing a plurality of light fixtures, each light fixture being physically associated with one of plurality of labels, each label containing unique indicia, comprising the steps of:
  - reading the indicia on the labels physically associated with light fixtures observed to be in need of repair or maintenance and storing information corresponding to the indicia,
  - conveying the stored information corresponding to the indicia to a microprocessor appliance comprising a database, wherein the database comprises information relating to the plurality of light fixtures comprising the locations of the plurality of light fixtures and supplies relating to the plurality of light fixtures, and

generating a report using the microprocessor appliance with information specific to light fixtures physically associated with the labels thus read, the report comprising a repair task route based on relative locations of the light fixtures physically associated with the labels thus read, the report specifying a sequence of fixture maintenance based on the relative locations of the light fixtures and further identifying supplies required for the light fixtures associated with the labels thus read.

Thus, claims 1 and 10 as currently amended specifically provide that the report and the database include information relating to supplies for the fixtures whose labels are read by the reader. As the Applicant had previously submitted, McCasland does not teach that a computer can “generate a maintenance report with an optimized repair task route, setting out the supplies that will be required, any special or unusual circumstances relating to specific fixtures 10, and the location of the circuit breaker which controls power to each fixture 10” (Application, paragraph 37, emphasis added). The Applicant submits that the independent claims, as currently amended, do recite this feature, whereas the cited prior art from the December 1, 2006 Office Action does not. Thus, it is submitted that the claims as amended are patentable over McCasland in view of Lovoi, and even further in view of Dolin, Beller, or Benson et al.

Further, claims 9 and 18, dependent on claims 1 and 10 respectively, have been amended to specify that the supplies relating to the plurality of light fixtures comprised in the database and in the report may include a bulb type and a fixture type, as described in paragraph 32. This is likewise not taught by the cited prior art.

***The application of the cited art to the currently amended claims is based on hindsight***

In the previous response, the Applicant had submitted that while the equipment in McCasland may be identified as “troubled” (McCasland, col. 18, lines 65-67), there is no teaching that a repair task route may be separately, automatically generated to address only such “trouble” spots. In the system taught by McCasland, the actual path taken by a worker following an inspection route is not determined physical location as taught by the present invention; rather, the path in McCasland is determined only with reference to some predefined “machinery domain”. Therefore, a person skilled in the art could not arrive at an optimized repair task route based on the physical locations of the items requiring attention. To suggest that McCasland would lead a

skilled worker to such a conclusion is to rely improperly on hindsight, influenced by the subject matter of the present application.

McCasland simply teaches that there is a predetermined list of equipment points for inspection; some or all of them in the predetermined list may be inspected, but only on a route that is predetermined when the points were initially defined in the McCasland system, and not on a route that is responsive to the actual reports of points actually in need of repair (see, for example, col. 24, line 14: McCasland states “[a]fter the section sequence has been determined”, but does not teach that the system can determine a sequence based on a need for repair”).

The Examiner responded to this argument in the Detailed Action of December 1, 2006 by stating that the Applicant had failed to define a “trouble” spot or a spot requiring attention in the pending claims. The Applicant submits that claim 1, as amended, does provide that the claimed light fixture management system results in a repair task route that is

based on relative locations of the identified light fixtures and further identifying supplies required for the identified light fixtures (emphasis added)

These “identified” light fixtures, as set out in currently amended claim 1, are those

light fixtures identified as being in need of repair or maintenance

the labels of which are read by the reader, as described, for example, in paragraphs 35 to 37 of the present application.

Thus, claim 1, as currently amended, specifies that the repair task route is based on those light fixtures that were identified as being in need of repair or maintenance and whose labels were read by the reader. Thus, the repair task route relates only to specific ones of the plurality of light fixtures. The claimed invention thus presents an advantage over McCasland, which merely teaches that a predetermined route should always be followed; perhaps, in McCasland, the tasks to be accomplished at a certain point on the route will be minimal, but McCasland teaches that each point is to be visited in turn, not that the points to be visited are identified in the manner recited in claim 1.

Thus, it is submitted that the claimed invention provides an advantage over McCasland. Where McCasland teaches that the user is directed to each inspection point, a worker following the repair task route of the currently amended claims is directed only to those light fixtures that were identified or observed to be in need of repair or maintenance, and were included in the repair task route by virtue of the fact that their associated indicia were read and provided to the microprocessor appliance. The present claimed subject matter thus avoids unnecessary stops on the route followed by the worker or user. A person skilled in the art implementing McCasland in respect of light fixtures, however, would still be left to follow a complete, previously defined route, whether the light fixtures at each point were in need of repair or not. The Applicant submits that an interpretation of McCasland as teaching the subject matter of currently amended claim 1 can only be the result of hindsight, influenced by the solution taught by the present invention. Further, McCasland does not teach or suggest that the points to be included on the route may be identified previously by a step of reading indicia, as recited in claim 1.

Similarly, the Applicant submits that the recited subject matter of claim 10 provides a similar advantage over the cited prior art. In addition, currently amended claims 6 and 15 provide that the light fixtures in need of repair are identified by an observer operating the reader (in the case of claim 6), or an observer carrying out the step of reading the indicia (in the case of claim 10), which determines what light fixtures are the subject of the repair task route. It is submitted that this aspect is not disclosed in any of the prior art cited in the December 1, 2006 Action.

A number of the currently amended claims (3, 7, 8, 12, 16, 17, 19) are amended to tidy up the language of those claims, or to clarify the relationship between the subject matter of those claims and the amended antecedent claims. Claims 2 and 11 have been amended to recite that the report may comprise special requirements relating to the light fixtures identified for the report, as described in paragraph 34 of the present application.

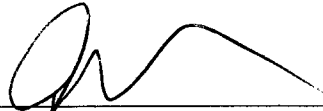
The Applicant accordingly respectfully submits that the present invention as claimed is not obvious based on the cited references, because it provides (amongst other benefits) the unexpected advantage of allowing the user to structure and equip maintenance and repair routines based on spatial location information relating to the inventory, which is not taught or suggested by any of the prior art.

A Petition for an Extension of Time requesting an extension of one month for filing the subject response is attached. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for same to our Deposit Account No. 500663.

Favourable reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Executed at Toronto, Ontario, Canada, on March 27, 2007.

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Petition for Extension of Time